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THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS

TESTIMONY OF THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS
BEFORE THE LEGISLATURE'S ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2015
1:00 PM, ROOM 2B, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING

RE: SB 366 AA EXTENDING THE BAN ON THE USE OF LAWN CARE PESTICIDES TO SCHOOLS THAT HOUSE GRADES NINE TO TWELVE, INCLUSIVE, AND TO STATE FACILITIES.

AND

SB 1063AAC THE APPLICATION OF PESTICIDES ON SCHOOL GROUNDS AND CERTAIN PUBLIC SPACES, AUTHORIZING THE USE OF CERTAIN MICROBIALS AND REESTABLISHING THE PESTICIDE ADVISORY COUNCIL.

Good afternoon. My name is Dr. Karissa Niehoff. I am the Executive Director of the CT Association of Schools / CT Interscholastic Athletic Conference ("CAS/CIAC"). CAS/CIAC represents more than 1,000 public and parochial elementary, middle and high schools in Connecticut.

We support a wide range of activities both academic and athletic. The CIAC is the governing body for interscholastic athletics. CAS/CIAC advocates for the best interests of schools, their students, faculty and administrators.

I am here today to testify on **SB 366 and SB 1063**. CAS/CIAC cannot support those two bills.

SB 366 expands the ban on the use of integrated pest management ("IPM") to high school fields. I can tell you that CAS/CIAC has heard from school principals, athletic directors and coaches from across the state that the ban on the use of IPM has resulted in a degradation of the quality of K-8 school athletic fields across the state. In communities that have both K-8 and high school fields, our administrators tell us consistently that their high school fields are in better condition than the K-8 fields.

CAS/CIAC believes safe playing fields are necessary. We are not merely talking about eliminating clover and weeds. We also need to prevent grubs, moles, poison ivy and invasives. Where IPM is prohibited athletic fields are reported to have insufficient turf and bare spots. When wet, these fields become unmanageable mud; when dry, the ground is like cement, with spots of grass causing balls to pop up and athletes to struggle for footing. These conditions result in more injuries. We believe that integrated pest management, as regulated by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, is designed to reduce the use of pesticides and then as a last resort. We do not believe that an expanded ban is in the public interest.

CAS/CIAC does not support **SB 1063** for similar reasons. Once again it expands the ban on the use of IPM to high school fields and grounds.

This completes my testimony. Thank you for your consideration.